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ABSTRACT

The Louisiana State Library reviewed its Pilot Library Program to determine its effect on future library development in state institutions. The program was a cooperative endeavor between the state library, an individual institution, and the state agency responsible for administering this institution. Mental, charitable, and penal institutions were included. Each institutional library was evaluated by American Library Association (ALA) standards according to general impressions, budget formulation, personnel problems and physical facilities. It was concluded that the Pilot Library Program should be continued and that the state library should adopt national library standards. Administration and staff should be made more aware of budgeting and personnel. (Author/DS)

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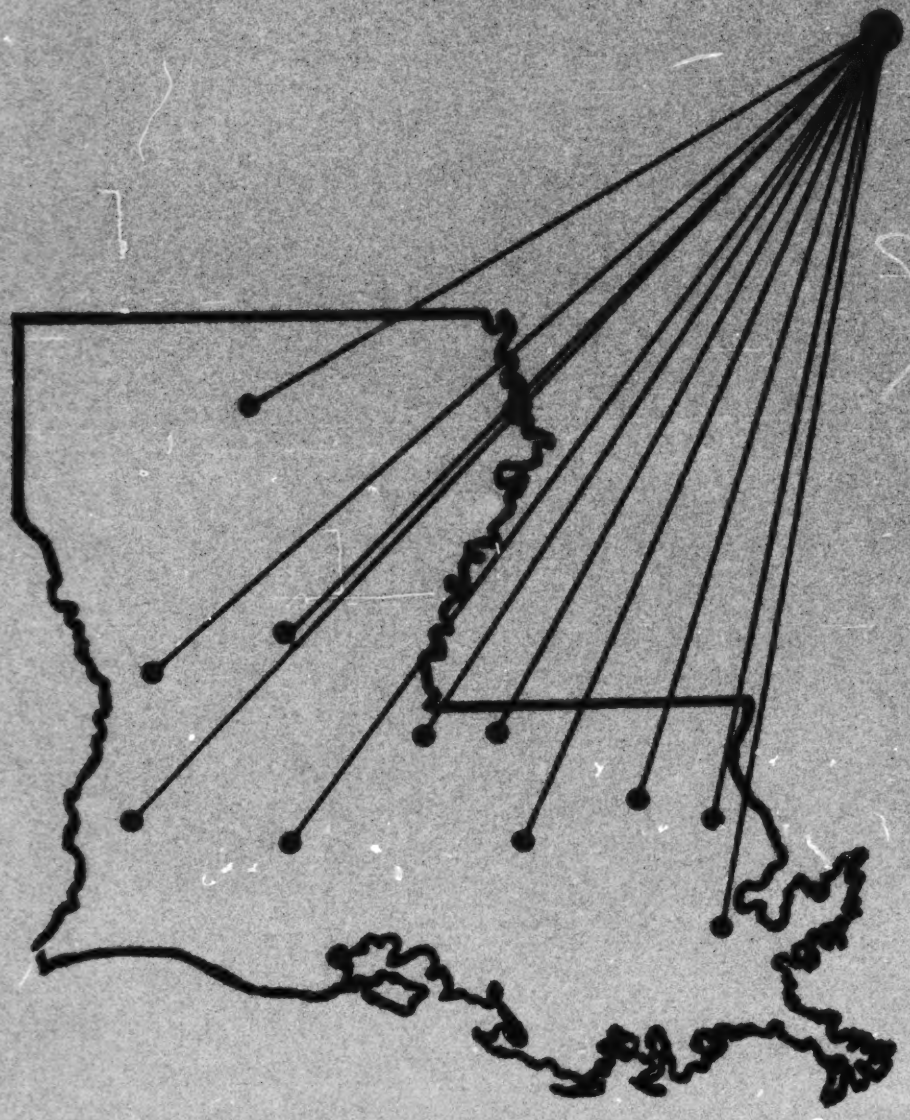
LOUISIANA STATE LIBRARY

INSTITUTIONAL LIBRARY PILOT PROGRAM

AN EVALUATION: NOVEMBER 5-27, 1974



MARION H. VEDDER

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LOUISIANA STATE LIBRARY

INSTITUTIONAL LIBRARY PILOT PROGRAM

AN EVALUATION: November 5-27, 1974

By

Marion H. Vedder

Formerly Director of Institutional Library Services

New York State Library

With Funds From Title I

Library Services and Construction Act

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Schenectady, New York

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Chapter I

INSTITUTIONAL LIBRARY PILOT PROGRAM

The State Library has authority to expend both State and Federal funds to establish and maintain library services of the highest level in "charitable and penal" institutions which include: Residential Schools, Division of Mental Retardation, Health and Human Resources Administration; Mental (and other) Hospitals, Health and Human Resources Administration; Correctional Institutions, State Department of Corrections and Handicapped Schools, State Department of Education.

During the past several years the State Library has been implementing this authority by establishing Pilot Library Programs in eleven of the thirty-three eligible institutions. A Pilot Library Program is a cooperative endeavor between the State Library, an individual institution and the state agency responsible for administering this institution. The State Library furnishes all the materials, furniture and equipment necessary to organize the library and the institution provides the space, any renovation required as well as the library personnel needed. This agreement between agencies is made binding by contract over a two-year period of time. At the end of this time the institution assumes responsibility for financing and administering the library with the State Library continuing to provide consultative service, reference and interlibrary loan and book processing.

Although these Pilot Library Programs have apparently been effective for arousing interest in and starting library service for the residents in institutions, the State Library decided to take a critical look at the program to determine its effect on future library development in State institutions.

Miss Marion H. Vedder, formerly Director of Institutional Library Services, New York State Library, was selected as evaluator and given the following charge:

"to evaluate each type of institutional library program .... relative to the objectives set forth in the State Library's long-range plan[1];

"to evaluate each institutional library to determine the services rendered and make recommendations regarding their continuation and new services to be rendered;

"to evaluate each library as to use made of it and determine degree of user satisfaction with the collection and services;

"to formulate an evaluative tool for each type of library to be used to measure its effectiveness at the end of the pilot period."

Within the limit of time and the availability for consultation of key staff members, each institution was visited for a minimum of five hours and a maximum of eight. Evaluative reports have been submitted of each visit and recommendations made. Most of the recommendations are based upon standards approved by parent national associations for the several types of institutions as well as by the American Library Association. Although these recommendations may seem to go beyond what is set forth in the State Library's long-range plan, it is mostly a matter of specifics, not of the over-all goal: to provide high level library service to every resident of Louisiana regardless of location, even if the location is a State institution.

The following aspects of the Institutional Library Pilot Program were studied and recommendations offered:

- Location and space needed for fullest use of the library
- Staff requirements: training, classification levels, numbers, continuing education opportunities
- Library's place in the Organization Chart
- Librarian's opportunity for intercommunication and interaction with total staff
- Librarian's responsibility for introducing residents to outside libraries
- Librarian's role in effecting better understanding and gaining more cooperation among public librarians
- Library collection: books, magazines, newspapers, recordings, and other educational and recreational audiovisual materials
- Equipment needed for library use and programming
- Budgets needed to continue to build libraries to a point of maximum use and efficiency and to continue to maintain library adequacy

A high degree of user satisfaction was apparent in every institution with one exception, Angola, where inmate counselors would like to move the law library into the general library which has been allowed to deteriorate over the past several years. The institution which enjoys the greatest user satisfaction is Central Louisiana State Hospital. Both patients and staff fully appreciate the quantity and quality of library service they have readily available to them, although there perhaps should be a larger percentage of patients using the library. The only thing found to be less than good was the capacity to listen to music in the library limited to a small unattractive alcove. In all other institutions the residents and

staff stated that they would like to have greater access to the library, particularly more evening and weekend hours. Residents often said they would like more of their favorite type book (no special trend noted) and others wanted more audiovisual materials, especially disc recordings.

To try to formulate an evaluative tool for each type of library seemed to be redundant. There are many variations among the so-called type-of-library institutions. Each must be judged by the library materials, services and programs which residents have available to them; the extent to which they are using them; and the percentage of potential library users not being reached.

It was not many years ago when administrators of schools for the mentally retarded said that practically none of the residents could benefit from library services. Now we know that a large percentage of these residents can enjoy library service, if it is geared for their needs. A report on the usage of the library now usually indicates the expertise of the librarian. It also can indicate, in a negative sense, deficiencies the library has in space allocation, in staffing and in budget which can keep materials and equipment current and in sufficient quantity.

Emphasis in this report will be placed on the need to secure adequate space, staff and materials in order to support the needs of the institution population and the programs they desire. STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL MEDIA PROGRAMS[2], is recommended to backstop each specific type-of-library standard as approved by the American Library Association and the parent association for

that type of library; e.g., LIBRARY STANDARDS FOR ADULT CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS[3]; STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES FOR THE MENTALLY RETARDED[4]; STANDARDS FOR LIBRARY SERVICES IN HEALTH CARE INSTITUTIONS[5].

Although conclusions reached by the evaluator indicate some weaknesses in the State Library Pilot Program, this program should certainly be continued until all eligible institutions have participated. Weaknesses do not stem directly from the State Library which seems in all instances to have met its obligation to provide well-selected and appropriate library materials and equipment and to provide many other services, such as book processing, interlibrary loans, films, service to the blind and handicapped, etc., as well as consultant service via telephone and semi-annual visits, editing and publishing an institution newsletter and planning semi-annual meetings for institution librarians.

In spite of all these services, however, all of which are at a high level, there is apparently not enough incentive nor enough "muscle" to make institution administrators sufficiently aware of the elements which must be continuously present, year after year, nor the level of financial support needed to keep libraries alive and flourishing. They have no library background as do parish/public library trustees. They are unfamiliar with national library standards and do not know how to use these standards to determine what is needed to maintain the kind of high level library program they all appear to want.

Working together the State Library staff and the institution administrators have been unable to secure and allocate well located and adequate

library facilities within the institutions, have not planned sufficiently well for library personnel needs and have not arrived at successful library budgets to insure continuation of library resources and services at the level recommended by national standards and desired by Louisiana residents of institutions.

In some instances, such as at Ruston, the library appears to be well located but is severely hampered for separate space for group programs. In others, such as Belle Chasse, it is questionable that the library is either well located or has sufficient space for programming and behind-the-scenes work. In only one institution, Central Louisiana State Hospital, is it apparent that the space is adequate and in a generally accessible location, backstopped by bookmobile service to outlying buildings and patients. Angola could have sufficient space if all of the area were usable for regular library service. Now a good portion of the library is used as a corridor leading into a back room used as a law library. This situation is not fair to either the general or the law library users. A bookmobile is also essential at Angola to take library service to outlying buildings.

With few exceptions library staffing is far from satisfactory. Let it be emphasized, however, that the caliber of the staff is definitely superior to classification ratings, lines of authority, and opportunities for promotion and continuing education. Lacking is the number of positions and the right classifications to do successfully the kind of job required.

With almost no exceptions library budgets are a problem. Librarians are not sufficiently knowledgeable or are too timid and uncertain to

prepare an adequate library budget and administrators are not usually too cooperative in helping to justify a library budget all the way to the Legislative Budget Committee. There are, of course, some exceptions.

These are problems which become increasingly urgent as institution libraries go off Pilot. They call for a greater commitment by the institution libraries, institution administrators, the State Library and finally by the State of Louisiana without which these programs will eventually wither and die of financial starvation.

SPACE AND LOCATION

Space and location are tremendously important to library services and programs and these, in turn, are main factors in reaching a large percentage of potential library users. The right location will vary in different institutions, depending upon general accessibility, mobility of residents, traffic patterns within the institution, etc. If there is a choice, the library should be near any educationally oriented programs, but not if this location will preclude use of the library by others not engaged in educational programs.

Allowance should be made for evening and weekend hours when the library will be open with a minimum of expense and supervision. The State Library Consultant should work persistently with administration in the institutions to find the right location and adequate space, not only for the present but for future expansion needs. This phase of the program is extremely important because it is increasingly difficult to change the space and location part of the program after installation of the library;

e.g., Leesville, Ruston, Hammond, Southeast Louisiana Hospital, Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women, Belle Chasse and Southwest Louisiana State School.

The space requirements in STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL MEDIA PROGRAMS are easily adapted and are more specific than other standards and should be followed, as appropriate, for the kind of program to be developed. If no existing space can be found and renovated in a suitable location and with sufficient footage, then the State Library Consultant should suggest a movable office or classroom type building and locate it where it will be most accessible. The Consultant for the State Library should work with an architect and/or builder of mobile buildings to help design satisfactory library areas from standard components.

PERSONNEL

The institution library personnel problem is equally complex. With the exception of Angola, each institution has at least one librarian (at Angola the position was vacant). A large number of these librarians, however, are classified as Librarian I. This classification requires at least 18 hours of library science but does not require a master's degree. Civil Service regulations specifically state that Librarian I positions are sub-professional and that there must be direct supervision by a Librarian II or higher. The present incumbents in Librarian I positions show great promise and should have attractive options offered them to encourage their working towards a master's degree. Options should include scholarships, LSU extension courses in Library Science planned for their

particular needs and in places convenient to work locations, summer courses which dovetail with extension courses and State agency approval of time off from work to attend classes.

In Schools for the Mentally Retarded which have strong education and training programs and small resident populations, it is possible to classify the person in charge of the library as Special Education Instructor II provided he or she has a teaching certificate with necessary experience. This classification provides a more adequate salary for some present incumbents and should help to prolong the tenure of valued personnel. It is not an ideal solution, however, and persons so classified should continue to take library courses to broaden their backgrounds in librarianship.

BUDGET

Every institution visited had budget problems after the Pilot ended. Librarians did not know at any time what funds were available for them to spend nor did they know how to prepare the library budget and get it approved. All, however, seemed to have felt comfortably well off while they were on Pilot (except for their own classification and salary).

Except at Central Louisiana State Hospital, which has a supervising Librarian III, there were no hospitals or institutions with library budgets which approached the total amount required to attain and maintain adequate library services. It seems that institution administrators may have no real understanding of the basic financial needs of libraries or, because of budget limitations, can do little about them. If library shelves

appear to be filled, too often administrators believe that the library is "made" and will last indefinitely or until the shelves are bare. Experience has shown that a five-year period is usually required to develop a good library, but that it can be severely damaged by even one year of neglect and that another three years of rehabilitation (with increased budget) will be required to bring it back to a functioning level. Regular library budgets requesting sufficient funds to maintain the kind and quality of service desired are most essential.

All institution administrators interviewed were happy with the Pilot Library Program and the services provided by the Louisiana State Library. Those off Pilot expressed the hope that the State Library could find funds to continue providing materials as they had done during the Pilot program. This type of continuing support to State institutions by the State Library, although highly desirable, will require new commitments by institutions and State agencies. The new commitments should assure future maintenance of institution libraries at a high level. The State Library should explore and evaluate the possibilities of serving the institution libraries through Library Systems, thereby utilizing all Louisiana library resources for all residents at minimum costs. As library development and integration of services continue to increase throughout Louisiana there well may be regionalization and cooperative achievements which will include institution libraries as partners.

Chapter II

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE LOUISIANA STATE LIBRARY

General

1. Pilot Library Programs should be continued until all thirty-three eligible institutions have participated. New pilots should be established as rapidly as State and federal funds, administered by the State Library, will permit.

2. The State Library should adopt national library standards as their goal for achieving for each institution 1) well located, adequate space; 2) personnel in sufficient quantity and with professional, technical and clerical qualifications required for the specific library programs desired; 3) resources in sufficient quantity and selected for the needs and interests of the residents; 4) programs which encourage full utilization of the resources both material and human, for the benefit of the residents. Only when national library standards become the goal and activated will the full meaning and value of library service be realized.

3. The State Library should consider a commitment to provide total library materials for institutions on a continuing basis, the amount to be based on national standards, and on the provision that the institutions and State agencies have indicated commitment to the substance of Recommendation Nos. 1 and 2 above. System and parish/public library resources should be considered in this commitment and contracts made according to the best services available to institution libraries.

4. The State Library should review the terms of the contract with State agencies and institutions and should strengthen commitments to include long-range goals based upon minimum national library standards - with commitments from all three parties concerned.

5. The terms of agreement should be reviewed annually by means of visits to the institutions by the State Library Consultant and by way of library reports submitted by the institutions. Report forms should be prepared by the State Library and should include more items than at present; e.g., report on acquisition of all audiovisual material and equipment (a commitment for the future at national library standards level).

Budget

6. The State Library should make institution administrators sufficiently aware of the elements needed to keep libraries alive and flourishing year after year including, most importantly, the level of financial support necessary at the end of the Pilot Program.

Personnel

7. As the number of institutions and the services required increases, the State Library staff should be augmented, particularly in the consultant and processing services.

8. The State Library with other State agencies and with institution administrators should work toward an equitable and sound solution to the personnel needs of institutional libraries. A career ladder for library positions should be established for both the professional and

clerical lines. Librarian I classification in the future should be used only to provide assistants to Librarian II positions.

9. Working with other State agencies with responsibility for institutions, the State Library staff should try to establish a clear line of authority so that institution librarians uniformly report to assistant directors in charge of programs or to comparable administrators. It limits and confines the library program to place its supervision under a director of a special program, whether this be Education, Occupational Therapy, Recreation, or other. This is not to say that the library should not be closely associated with these programs, only that its function is to serve the total institution, both residents and staff.

Other

10. The State Library should arrange for meetings where public librarians, institution librarians and specialists meet to consider ways in which each can be helpful to the other. Meetings should acquaint librarians with the various characteristics and special needs of the institutionalized and ways to cope with any unusual behavior and mannerism.

11. The whole State of Louisiana should be apprised of the program for institution library service initiated in 1967 by the Louisiana State Library and continued with encouraging results to date and should support the State Library in its current and future efforts to bring high level library service to all residents of Louisiana, including those under treatment in institutions. There should be a strong public relations program involving institution administrators, legislators, influential persons, professional leaders and present and past institution residents.

12. Similar to the Modissette Awards for Public Libraries and for School Libraries it would be desirable to establish an award for Institution Libraries. The Citation of Merit will be cherished by the recipients and the whole procedure should provide excellent public relations, both within institutions and State agencies but also among the library community.

13. Parish and other local or regional libraries should determine the library needs of the residents of local and private institutions, half-way houses, etc. within their areas of service and should take necessary steps to provide library services - perhaps by means of bookmobile, a bus to bring residents to the library, rotating collections of books, film programs, direct mail service on an individual basis, a combination of these or some other method of providing library service. This is a local library responsibility but for special library services the institution may agree to reimburse the library.

Louisiana has a great deal to be proud of in its programs with institution libraries. Although not all institutions have had the benefit of a Pilot Library Program to date, those that have compare very favorably with institution library programs in other states in similar settings. This is largely a subjective judgment since no comparative research has been attempted. The most important factor is that residents of Louisiana State institutions are pleased with the library services provided and that a goodly number of residents use library resources for one reason or another.

Chapter III

MENTAL HEALTH INSTITUTIONS

HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION

Institutions Visited:

Central Louisiana State Hospital
Pineville, Louisiana
Dr. Roy Hill, Superintendent
Mr. B. Carol McGee, Medical Librarian
Miss Phyllis L. Ward, Librarian
Currently vacant, Bibliotherapist

East Louisiana State Hospital
Jackson, Louisiana
Dr. T. N. Armistead, Superintendent
Miss Marsha Kemp, Librarian

Southeast Louisiana Hospital
Mandeville, Louisiana
Dr. Gary A. Sneed, Superintendent
Mrs. Dolores Calkins, Librarian

GENERAL IMPRESSIONS

At both Southeast Louisiana and Central Louisiana State hospitals the programs observed were designed to help patients reorient themselves to living in today's rapidly changing world. At East Louisiana State Hospital this kind of programming was not observed during the visit there of a few hours. In all three hospitals the directors stated that they were firmly supportive of a high level library program and were appreciative of the Pilot Library Program of the State Library.

At East the new library facilities were "outlined" but there was still much to be done to complete readying the new quarters physically and organizing the collection of materials being provided by the State

Library. The location of the Medical Library in relationship to the General Library was being debated. If the present location is retained, at least one additional librarian position will be required. It appeared that patients at East lead a more restricted life than at either Southeast or Central. Perhaps their illnesses are more severe. The new library will be a great asset to patient and staff enjoyment and should provide many individual and group programs.

Southeast Louisiana Hospital seemed to provide excellent treatment and programs for patients who need an intensive, short duration hospitalization - at least this conclusion was reached after a one-day visit there. The library must be able to supply the needs and interests of many people as they come and go to make such an impact on them that former patients will continue to benefit from their community public programs. The library was equipped to do this quite well, except that visits to outside libraries to help break down any barriers should be initiated and some evening and weekend hours when the library would be open should be planned.

A closer union between the General and Medical Libraries should be considered with one supervising professional librarian directing all library functions. An obstacle to this closer relationship is the present funding of the librarian's salary from federal funds administered by the parish school district. This position should be financed by the hospital, thereby freeing the librarian's services in order for the whole hospital to benefit, not just those patients under twenty-one years old. Such an arrangement as exists is restrictive and should be discontinued as soon as other funding can be assured.

Central Louisiana State Hospital was a pleasant surprise and experience. Entering the hospital grounds on streets controlled by traffic lights was a sign of thoughtful planning. Without any doubt this hospital ranks among the best visited, regardless of state or location. It was a fitting climax to a full day of observing many fine programs to hear the accrediting doctor from California, representing the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Hospitals, state that he found the libraries to be superlative. This high praise is deserved but there must be no relaxation of effort to keep the library collections and services at high level and to initiate other services and materials as a need for them is discovered.

Chapter IV

MENTAL RETARDATION INSTITUTIONS

HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATION

Institutions Visited:

Belle Chasse State School
Belle Chasse, Louisiana
Mr. James R. Austin, Superintendent
Miss Florence Jumonville, Librarian

Hammond State School
Hammond, Louisiana
Mr. Austin Glass, Superintendent
Miss Antoinette Liuzza, Librarian

Leesville State School
Leesville, Louisiana
Mr. Frank White, Superintendent
Mr. Howard Coy, Jr., Librarian

Ruston State School
Ruston, Louisiana
Mr. Edward Dettenheim, Superintendent
Mrs. Jane Sims, Librarian

Southwest Louisiana State School
Iota, Louisiana
Mr. Frank Bailey, Superintendent
Sister Regina Arnaud, Librarian

GENERAL IMPRESSIONS

Each school visited demonstrated an enlightened concern for its residents. Staff members encountered appeared to have qualifications and temperaments suited to their work. The environments were pleasant and the buildings and grounds were well cared for. There were active programs designed to develop each resident to his or her fullest potential; and, in most instances, there was a commendable effort to

train and educate the families of the residents in the home care needed to sustain the progress achieved at the institution as the retardates return to their families and the "outside" community.

In the three schools (Hammond, Leesville and Ruston) which now have libraries in operation it was apparent that residents were finding library materials and programs which they enjoyed. Some were daily visitors as schedules permitted. Most, however, came to the library in a group to have a special program arranged for them and with time allowed for them to browse or select an individual activity of their choice.

Library materials and activities seemed to be well selected for resident reading levels and interests. In each instance the librarian was capable and enthusiastic about his/her job. Both residents and staff indicated appreciation of the librarian and the services provided by the library. These programs would not, of course, be as well established, and might not even exist, without the services and support of the State Library.

Although scheduled visits called for interviews with directors of the schools, these interviews were not possible at either Leesville or Ruston, since meetings at Baton Rouge required the presence of a number of staff members, including directors, on the day of my visit. Directors at Hammond, Belle Chasse and Southwest Louisiana State School are enthusiastic about the newly developed libraries and believe they provide valuable services which are enjoyed (or will be enjoyed) by a substantial number of residents and by the staff.

Even though each school library visited was attractive (except Southwest Louisiana State School which had no real library facility ready) there was not even one which would meet all basic specifications. Belle Chasse, just organizing, has perhaps not yet felt the "pinch", except that there is no place to put all the desirable library furniture being provided through the State Library; no office; no workroom; no storage space; and no separate room for group programming.

Ruston, which has the largest area, lacks a separate room for film showings and other group activities and the office/workroom/storage area is too small for efficiency and comfortable accommodation. Lack of space inevitably regulates the kinds of programs which the library can provide. Only one program at a time can take place. The result is that residents wishing to use the library on passes interrupt the program constantly so that the full effect is lost.

Hammond has all the necessary component parts, but the film showing room is too small and poorly light conditioned and the office/workroom/storage space is far too small and entirely isolated while any program is taking place.

Leesville has the potential of a great library program but the goal is severely hampered by space confinements. There is no real office, no workroom/storage space and no separate film showing room.

When available, directors were informed of the general direction that recommendations of this Pilot Library Evaluation would take, including use of STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL MEDIA PROGRAMS. Using these standards as well as STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES FOR THE MENTALLY RETARDED, recommendations were made.

Chapter V

CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS

STATE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Institutions Visited:

Louisiana Correctional and Industrial School
DeQuincy, Louisiana
Mr. Warren Cormier, Superintendent
Mr. Robert Ivey, Librarian

Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women
St. Gabriel, Louisiana
Mr. J. D. Middlebrooks, Superintendent
Miss Alice Pointer, Librarian

Louisiana State Penitentiary
Angola, Louisiana
Mr. C. Murray Henderson, Warden
Mr. Anthony Benoit, Librarian

GENERAL IMPRESSIONS

Visits to the three adult correctional institutions ran the gamut from an exceptionally well administered institution where the residents appeared to be engaged in some worthwhile educational or vocational activity (Louisiana Correctional and Industrial School) to Angola where programs and activities were understandably minimal when the number of staff and the hugh resident population were considered.

Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women has a new facility with well planned living quarters but far from adequate space for a library, although a fairly sizable area for a law library has been developed. The only educational program observed was one for remedial reading. Recreation programs appeared to be well enjoyed by the residents.

Staff and resident relationships seemed to be friendly and discipline quite well maintained. It was distracting and unpleasant, however, to have loud speaker announcements interrupt programs so continuously. There must be some less irritating means of communicating. The knowledge that the assistant director is recommending an increase in the librarian's hours (from 15 to 25 hours weekly) is encouraging but these hours will still be below the recommended standard.

Louisiana Correctional and Industrial School has a recidivism rate of about 20 per cent which is a most commendable statistic when compared with other correctional institutions throughout the country. It indicates effective supervision, good motivation for self improvement and programs which have appeal and practical application.

The library in the institution is fulfilling an important role in total institution goals and objectives. Residents and staff make good use of its materials and services. The care with which library materials are handled indicates a high regard for the library. Residents, however, stated that they would like to have some evening and weekend hours.

Without doubt Louisiana State Penitentiary at Angola is the most monstrous, most isolated and the saddest example of penology and correctional treatment ever encountered by this visitor. It is to be commended that the administration has tried to have a satisfactory library service but the constant turnover of professionally trained library staff indicates a lack of job satisfaction and more than normal frustrations.

Angola must have been established when taxpayers wanted to put offenders away out of sight and out of mind. In 1974 popular opinion is undergoing significant changes. More and more citizens believe that many convicted criminals can and will be changed into self-supporting, accepted citizens if given basic education and the skills to assure them jobs which pay living wages.

There were not enough staff at the penitentiary to allow contemplation of anything beyond strict security programs. This makes it more difficult to provide really effective library programs. Institution libraries exist in great measure to support other institution programs where such programs flourish. Libraries can also be a life-giving influence to those individuals who seek out their resources as a means of general education, inspiration and practical knowledge. Recommendations will indicate what is needed to accomplish worthwhile library goals.

Chapter VI

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL MENTAL HEALTH, MENTAL RETARDATION AND CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION LIBRARIES

General

1. The library should rank as a line department of the institution responsible directly to the administration. Since institutional libraries serve the total institution population (staff, those in education programs, those not in education programs), the line of communication should be directly to the Assistant Director or, in his absence, directly to the Director.

2. All library service should be closely coordinated within each institution whether it is directed toward the resident through the general or legal reference library, or toward the staff through the professional or medical library.

Budget

3. Most importantly, within each institution there must be a separate library budget. Even though funds may come from several different sources they must be kept in a unified library account.

4. The library budget should be maintained at a standard level. When one or two years of neglect and reduced budgets occur, a library becomes so debilitated that several years of rehabilitation and additional expenses are needed to bring it back to a condition for effective service.

5. The budget for library materials and equipment should be built on standards as well as current and future needs. Standards call for continuation of magazine and newspaper subscriptions and for an annual replacement of one-tenth of the book and audiovisual collections based on the quantities recommended in the section on MATERIALS, Nos. 19-33, pages 28-30.

6. The personnel budget should include the positions mentioned in Recommendation No. 8 below.

7. Funds should be included in the budget to permit the staff to attend library meetings, workshops, etc., and to maintain institutional memberships in health/correctional and library associations.

Personnel

8. There should be a supervising Librarian III or II (depending on population served) to coordinate all library functions and a sufficient number of staff at appropriate levels to carry out effective library programs for both residents and staff.

9. The supervising librarian, or delegated staff member, should attend all institution department head sessions for policy or other considerations. Only when librarians are familiar with institution plans and programs can they make their library collections and programs most responsive to the needs and objectives of the total institution.

Physical Facilities

10. The library should be located in an area with easy access by all residents and staff.

11. Library space should be attractive and functionally equipped and should provide ample areas for:

a. book, magazine and newspaper shelving,

b. carrels for individual viewing and listening,

c. tables and chairs (some comfortable and informal for relaxed reading),

d. separate but adjacent space for film showings and other programs,

e. workroom and storage large enough to provide good organization for items used at intervals, creation of audiovisual materials and programs and safe storage of materials and equipment,

f. office space where some supervision of the library is possible, but where quiet and a degree of comfort are also possible.

12. Equipment should be selected for quality performance, ease of operation and durability. It should be replaced before it becomes worn and subject to frequent breakdowns. (An electronic loop for wireless headphones of good quality in one or more library rooms is a popular program wherever it is installed.)

13. The library shall be the information center for the entire institution and should be connected with all parts of the institution and with the outside library community by means of a telephone.

Service

14. The librarian should plan visits to local libraries and cultural institutions to keep or bring residents in touch with community educational, cultural and social institutions. In correctional facilities where visits may not be feasible, the librarian should plan programs and activities within the institution which will achieve this same goal.

15. Within the time span residents are brought in touch with institutional library service, the impact of this service must be such that they will be motivated to use their own local libraries after leaving the facility.

16. The library should encourage individual creative expression (poetry, essays, films, music, etc.) and also group involvement (discussion groups, film discussions, poetry readings, etc.) Through Bibliotherapy, individuals and groups should be involved with reading, writing, viewing or listening in which discussion is used for therapeutic purposes.

17. Library programming should be such that it reaches all residents regardless of location and whether or not they are able to come to the library. Programming should encompass the interests and needs of various ethnic groups, those with low or no reading ability as well as those with high intelligence quotients (IQ) and intellectual capacity. Programs should be carefully planned to include a variety of media and developed for both individual and group enjoyment.

18. Library hours should meet the requirements of library users and should be as generous as possible. Hours should be extended beyond those of the workday to include evenings (at least one), weekends and holidays.

Materials

[Explanatory Note: Because different standards were used to arrive at quantitative recommendations for materials in three types of libraries (Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Corrections), it was necessary to separate this section from the more general recommendations for all institutions.]

Mental Health Institution Libraries

19. The basic collection should be built to no less than 10,000 volumes of well selected titles. This is the recommended base for small public libraries, secondary schools, as well as hospitals.

20. The magazine collection should have a minimum of 100 titles with sufficient duplication to place current most popular titles directly on wards. The long-range goal should call for the magazines to be expanded to 125-175 titles since these are enjoyed by the patients so much.

21. Newspapers representing 10-12 major Louisiana cities and national presses are recommended as well as some weekly news sheets for those with reading problems.

22. No less than 1,000 to 2,000 tape and disc recordings or six per resident, whichever is greater, are recommended.

23. Other audiovisual materials as found useful and enjoyed should be purchased in the following recommended quantities:

a. filmstrips - 1,500 prints or three per resident,

b. 8 mm films - 500 titles or 1 1/2 per resident,

c. 16 mm films - access to a minimum of 3,000 titles.

Mental Retardation Institution Libraries

24. The basic book collection recommended is 4,000-6,000 volumes or 20 books per person able to read. This is a reasonable interpretation of national standards.

25. The magazine collection should have 40-50 subscriptions representing no less than 20 titles.

26. Weekly news sheets for slow readers as well as 20 newspapers from areas of Louisiana from which residents come should be made available.

27. A tape and record collection should consist of 1,000-2,000 titles.

28. Other audiovisual materials should be selected based upon the characteristics and needs of the resident population. These materials are unquestionably most valuable in institutions for the retarded and should be included:

a. access to 3,000 titles of 16 mm films plus funds for rental,

b. access to 2,000 titles of 8 mm films or 1 1/2 film per resident,

c. 1,500 filmstrip prints,

d. 2,000 slides.

Correctional Institution Libraries

29. The basic book collection should be built to no less than 12,000 volumes of well selected titles or 10 titles per resident. This base collection recommendation is compatible with recommendations made for small public libraries and secondary schools.

30. The magazine collection should contain 40-80 titles per 300 residents with multiple copies as needed.

31. Newspapers representing 20 major Louisiana and national presses are recommended as well as some weekly news sheets for those with reading problems or foreign language needs.

32. No less than 1,000-2,000 tape and/or disc recordings or a minimum of one per resident, whichever is greater, is recommended.

33. Additional audiovisual materials as found to be useful and enjoyed should be purchased in recommended quantities:

a. filmstrips - 1 title per resident,

b. 16 mm films - access to at least 1,000 titles,

c. wide selection of games, puzzles, kits, art objects, comic books, etc.

Chapter VII

ADDITIONAL SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INDIVIDUAL INSTITUTION LIBRARIES.

A. Mental Health Institutions

Central Louisiana State Hospital

1. The audiovisual alcove should be enlarged and provide a wider variety of equipment.
2. An electronic loop with wireless headphones should be considered to accommodate the numerous patrons wishing to listen to tape or disc recordings.
3. Because paperbacks are so much in demand, some should be purchased on a regular basis. Donations are fine, but do not always produce the titles wanted or needed most.
4. A study should be made to determine if all patients who could enjoy some part of the library program are being encouraged to do so.

East Louisiana State Hospital

1. The Resident Library should be directed by a Librarian II with assistance from a Librarian I, a Library Technical Assistant and a Clerk-Typist. Part-time assistant help will also be necessary to assist with bookmobile service and evening and weekend hours. If the Medical Library is not placed adjacent to the general library area, then additional staffing will be required.

Southeast Louisiana Hospital

1. The librarian should immediately be placed on the hospital payroll under Civil Service serving the library needs of all the residents.
2. Additional part-time assistants (at least 15-20 hours weekly) would allow library personnel to accompany small groups on library-oriented field trips, etc., and would provide staff to keep the library open at least one evening a week and on weekends.
3. More library space would be advantageous - both within the library room itself and the office/workroom/storage area.
4. A separate film room is needed.

B. Mental Retardation Institutions

Belle Chasse State School

1. Space for library resources and activities must be greatly expanded to include the areas indicated in Recommendation No. 11, page 26.
2. The library staff should be augmented by a Library Technical Assistant or by a Clerk-Typist now and by both when the population of the institution is increased.
3. While the library is new and developing and the school population is small, a budget of no less than $40.00 per resident is recommended. As the population increases and the library resources increase, it is possible to reduce the budget by 50 per cent.

Hammond State School

1. Neither the location, size nor layout of the library is satisfactory for best library service. A more central location is desirable incorporating the areas found in Recommendation No. 11, page 26, with a minimum of 2,460 square feet of floor space. If this is not available in present buildings, a movable classroom type building should be considered.
2. Although the present collection is quite good, it should be expanded in all areas - both print and audiovisual materials.
3. A volunteer librarian or a part-time assistant is needed to offer library service on weekends.

Leesville State School

1. The library should be relocated in an area sufficiently large and flexible to provide the various needs of a good library program (See Recommendation No. 11, page 26). A minimum of 2,000 square feet of space is recommended.
2. More staff is definitely needed, preferrably at the Library Technical Assistant level.
3. The librarian position should be at the Librarian II level (the first step in full professional librarianship). The present incumbent (Librarian I) should be given every help possible to qualify for the next level.

Ruston State School

1. An adjacent but separate film showing and group activity space is needed as well as more storage area.
2. A telephone in the office-work area is urgently needed!
3. The librarian should complete the school library certification program and make plans to continue until a Librarian II level can be reached.
4. The librarian's time should not be taken with routine Education Department duties which force the closure of the library and cancel scheduled visits by residents.
5. A new position of Library Technical Assistant or Clerk-Typist should be created to enable the librarian to do more professional (less clerical) work and allow for expanded programs.

6. As soon as feasible, all library services (staff and residential) should be unified.
7. The many good programs at Ruston should be publicized utilizing video taping equipment now idle.

Southwest Louisiana State School

1. Plan a permanent library facility to be adequate (or more than adequate) for the general library incorporating the areas recommended in No. 11, page 26).
2. Reclassifying the librarian position (at least temporarily) to Special Education Instructor II. This will assure the present incumbent (highly qualified by both college courses and experience) will be able to remain through the organizational stages of the program.
3. Augment library staff to include a full-time Library Technical Assistant which will permit the librarian to keep closer in touch with the total institution program including the satellites at Opelousas and Eunice.
4. Continue to share library expertise and experience with others concerned with Special Education.

C. Correctional Institutions

Louisiana Correctional and Industrial School

1. The general library needs approximately 4,000 square feet of space. Although the present space is used well, it is insufficient for full programming, collection expansion, adequate office, workroom and storage areas. Adjacent but separate areas for staff library and legal reference service totalling 1,600 square feet should be provided for a grand total of 5,600 square feet of unified library area.
2. The Librarian I position should be reclassified to Librarian II and a full-time Library Technical Assistant should be hired immediately. The present Librarian I should be encouraged to qualify for a Librarian II position.
3. The book collection is now more than 50 per cent below recommended size and should be built toward a collection of 12,000 volumes.
4. Audiovisual materials and equipment should be greatly expanded, especially disc recordings and filmstrips. An electronic loop with ample headphones is recommended for greater use and enjoyment of recordings.

Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women

1. All library functions (general, staff and legal reference) should be coordinated by a full-time professional librarian. The Librarian I position should be reclassified to Librarian II and

the present librarian should be encouraged to qualify for a Librarian II position. Two clerical assistants should be drawn from the resident population.

2. Because space in the residents' library is so inadequate, it is recommended that some of the most popular materials be moved into the lounge area. These materials would include paperbacks, magazines (except current issues) and a selection of disc recordings.

3. Space and shelving for about 300 volumes should be allocated for a small staff library in an area frequented by all staff.

4. Since the present book collection of about 2,000 volumes does not meet the national standards of a 12,000 volume basic collection, it is recommended that:

   a. at least 200 hardcover books be purchased annually and an equal number weeded out.

   b. the paperback collection be freshened monthly with new titles as they are published and old favorites be replaced.

   c. an arrangement (contract) should be made with the Parish Public Library (or other large library) to provide rotating collections of books on no less than a quarterly basis and no less than 200 books annually.

(It is recognized that although this arrangement will still not meet national standards, it should go a long way toward satisfying the need for new, fresh material, especially if backstopped by frequent inter-library loans and a professional librarian who can make every book count by giving expert reading guidance.)

5. Magazine subscriptions should be expanded.

6. A substantial collection of materials for those with reading handicaps should be built up; i.e., high interest-low vocabulary materials. These are needed to support existing institution programs.
7. A full range of audiovisual materials (and programs) should be considered carefully. Disc recordings have proven especially successful and a collection to meet standards is recommended representing all types of recorded music, spoken word, etc.
8. Other audiovisual programs such as 8 mm films, filmstrips, etc., could prove to be useful.

Louisiana State Penitentiary

1. Renovate and utilize total area now housing general and law libraries to accommodate needs of the general resident library.
2. Find adequate space and locations (to be coordinated with general library) to house adequate collections for legal reference service and staff library. This may be a movable classroom or rooms attached to the general library but with a separate entrance. (Space needs for Law Library can be obtained by referring to GUIDELINES FOR LEGAL REFERENCE SERVICE IN CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS[6] available from the American Correctional Association.)
3. Augment the library staff to include:
   a. one Librarian III position - supervising librarian (new)
   b. one Librarian II position - (retained)
   c. one Librarian I position - semi-professional (new)
   d. one Library Technical Assistant (new)
   e. two or more Clerk-Typists (new) plus clerks as needed for Law Library service.

4. In keeping with the standard of 10 titles per resident, this would mean for the "New Prison" population of 1,672, a book collection of 16,720; for the 2,300 residents in other areas of the penitentiary there should be an addition of 23,000 volumes with heavy duplication of the most useful and most used titles and a large proportion of paperbacks, preferrably reinforced for longer life. These will be used largely in bookmobile service, although cell block collections of paperbacks are popular.

5. Programs and library activities should be revitalized and expanded to provide for individual creative expression and for group activities.

6. The library should cooperate with all institution efforts at rehabilitation and should initiate programs to implement rehabilitative goals.

Notes

[1] Louisiana State Library. CLEAR PURPOSE - COMPLETE COMMITMENT: A Long-Range Program..1973-1977, pp. 34-37.

[2] American Library Association/National Education Association. STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL MEDIA PROGRAMS, 1969.

[3] American Correctional Association, Committee on Institution Libraries. LIBRARY STANDARDS FOR ADULT CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS, draft, August 1974.

[4] Joint Commission on Accreditation of Hospitals, Accreditation Council for Facilities for the Mentally Retarded. STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL FACILITIES FOR THE MENTALLY RETARDED, 1971.

[5] American Library Association, Association of Hospital and Institution Libraries. STANDARDS FOR LIBRARY SERVICES IN HEALTH CARE INSTITUTIONS, 1970.

[6] American Correctional Association. GUIDELINES FOR LEGAL REFERENCE SERVICE IN CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS, 1973.